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A REPORT

OF A COMMITTEE UPON

MINISTERIAL INCOMES,

PRESENTED TO THE SYNOD OF

THE DIOCESE OF HURON.

THURSDAY, JUNE 23, 1859.

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DIOCESE OF HURON, C. W., }
June 23. 1859. }

The following Report of a Committee appointed by the Lord Bishop of Huron, at the meeting of the Synod in September, 1858, was presented at the late session, on Thursday, June 23, 1859, upon which the following action was taken :—

"That the Report be referred back to the Committee, with instructions to prepare an abstract of the same, which they shall submit to the Lord Bishop, and which, upon receiving His Lordship's sanction, shall be printed and extensively circulated in the Diocese, with a view to action being taken upon it, at the next meeting of the Synod."

A number of gentlemen, however, have undertaken to print and circulate the entire Report on their own responsibility, and at their own cost.

Persons, especially Subscribers, desiring copies for the purpose of distribution, will please apply to

REV. F. FAUQUIER,
South Zorra.

LONDON, C. W., June 25, 1859.

DIOCESE OF
HURON, C. W.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE

UPON

MINISTERIAL INCOMES.

Your Committee, appointed at the last meeting of Synod (September 1858,) "To take into consideration the most Scriptural and practical methods of remedying the present insecurity of Ministerial Incomes," beg to report :--

Your Committee feel that the duty imposed upon them is one of very solemn character, many of the Clergy being, at the present time, in circumstances of distressing perplexity; a condition in which the Church of Christ cannot permit His Ambassadors to remain, without herself incurring deep guilt. In the view of your Committe, however, it is the moral necessities of the people themselves, the sad danger lest the Church should languish from the want of an adequate number of efficient and duly authorized Clergymen, and the consequent sore punishment which the sordid disobedience producing such ruin would be sure to incur; it is these things that give to the subject under consideration its most vital importance.

The famine, then, of the Word and Ordinances under which this Diocese is at present suffering, is something positively appalling; your Committee understand that there are, at this moment, about ninety well-settled Townships without a resident Clergyman! the large majority of their settlers being our fellow countrymen; yea, and no small portion of them "fellow-heirs with ourselves of the promises," being baptized members of the Church, but now, alas, entirely cut off from her ordinances and means of grace. Nor is even this the most alarming feature in the future prospects of our Diocese, if the present sordid scale of provision for the maintenance of the Ministers of God is to continue; since, in such case, even many of the older parishes must, on the death, or removal, of their present incumbents, whose incomes are principally derived from the Clergy Commutation Fund, be left without any successors, and the flocks there, also, be consequently scattered to the four winds of heaven.

Did we not know the Church to be founded upon the Rock of Ages, faith itself would fail as we contemplated this mournful state of things. But, let it not be forgotten, that the accomplishment of the promises, as they respect our own Diocese, greatly depends upon our own faithfulness; otherwise, as was the case with the Asiatic Churches, our candlestick, also, may be removed. And while your Committee earnestly pray "God forbid," they cannot feel that the fear is groundless, so long as the Members of Christ are themselves moving in a position which admits of the enjoyment of ample earthly comforts, yea, thousands of them in positive luxury, but are yet withholding from the Divine Treasury the means required to support, in sufficient numbers, and in a proper manner, the Ministers of the Sanctuary; for what more certain evidence can the righteous indignation of God require that "the love of many is waxing cold?"

Before proceeding to offer any suggestions to this Venerable Body upon "the most Scriptural and practical methods" of remedying these painful evils, your Committee beg leave to make a few observations upon a subject closely connected with the one intrusted to them; namely, the peculiar difficulty--over and above that general earthly-mindedness which is the especial curse of our age and Continent-- that the Church encounters, as compared with Dissent, in obtaining and duly paying a sufficient, numerous body of Clergy:---

1. The Church does not pander (perhaps she too much leans to the opposite extreme) to the love of animal exicitement and spiritual self-exaltation, which are natural to man; nor does she offer those numerous little offices by which some religious bodies flatter the love of distinction in their members.

2. A second source of our pecuniary difficulties is less creditable to the children of the Church---it is the absence of a stated system in making their offerings to God. One of the chief secrets to which British Wesleyan Methodism owes its continued measure of success, appears to be the rule which enjoins its members to give weekly, and again quarterly, in larger sums, for *the support of their preachers;* besides which, many of them exercise a liberality to their other denominational objects, that certainly does them credit. And yet here, it is impossible not to recollect what admirable provision the Fathers of the Anglican Reformation made for this very thing, and that after the most exact Apostolic model, in the regular Sunday, and Festival, OFFERTORY enjoined in "The Book of Common Prayer;" the conscientious observance of which would itself, with the blessing of Almighty God, go far to renovate the face of our Diocese.

3. But, after all, it must be admitted that the difficulty under consideration presses more heavily upon the Church than upon other religious bodies, because of that higher standard of qualification which the former ordinarily requires in her Clergy. Respecting the all-important requisite of personal piety, your Committee make no remark; they hope that few, amongst any denomination, would dare the impious wish to "minister in holy things," unless they imagined that they were "towardly moved by the Holy Ghost to take upon them that office and ministration." It is, however, different with other qualifications. The Church wishes her Clergy to be possessed of, at least, that moderate scholarship so necessary for

the defence and elucidation of Gospel truth and Apostolic order; she would also have them men of general information and intelligence, and, if it may be, distinguished by a certain degree of mental refinement and gentlemanly courtesy;—all of which are certainly, more or less, essential to the complete equipment of those who are to "speak for God," and to hold a social position which ought, for the well-being of the community at large, to be one of the most influential in the country.

It is evident, however, that in reasonable consistency with these habits, a proper sufficiency of income is requisite; not abounding wealth, for the servants of the cross—lay, indeed, as well as cleric—should ever be distinguished by a spirit of self-denial, especially when required by the necessities of the Church of Christ. But *poverty is not the necessary condition of the Pastors*, where the flock are in a position comfortable, as are those of most of our Canadian settled parishes. And your Committee have no wish to forget that the Anglican Church rather frowns than otherwise, upon the *celibacy* of a parochial clergy. Especial consideration, therefore, should be given to the heavy expenses which a Clergyman's family and position entail upon him:—in the pure training and liberal education of his children; that generous hospitality to which the Clergy, in this, as in other things, being ensamples, to the laity, are commanded to "be given;" those abundant alms-deeds and liberal offerings to God, by which it is so desirable they should be distinguished; with a long catalogue of pecuniary calls, to which their sacred profession and prominent social status subjects them; all of which require that they shall be themselves raised far above penury. Nor can a Clergyman pass by these claims without decided injury to the influence of the Church, to his own usefulness, and a painful lowering of self-respect.

Such are the *desiderata*, personal and relative, which the Church looks for in those who "minister at her altars;" a standard certainly higher than that of the denominations around us; but yet is it both the disgrace and the sin of Canadian Churchmen, that our funds should come so far short of affording a fitting maintenance for such a ministry; and, alas, still less will they provide them so in anything like sufficient numbers.

Seeing, then, that these things are so, it is no matter of surprise to your Committee, that young men of suitable attainments and pure minds, though it may be of somewhat timid faith, but who are, nevertheless, sincerely desirous of devoting themselves to the service of Christ and His Church, should shrink from facing the attendant difficulties. Do not the secular trials of some of the Clergy, at this very time, and the struggling circumstances of the Widows and Orphans of others, but too well justify their fears? Yea, may they not have witnessed instances in which the Clergyman's usefulness has been totally destroyed, and his very character endangered by the crushing effects of debts, the creation of which—from the dishonest parsimony of his parish, in the smallness and *uncertainty* of his salary—it was all but impossible for him to have avoided? Or, perhaps they have known another pastor of the flock prevented from visiting his poor parishioners, even to impart the consolations of the Gospel, because he had not wherewith to minister to their necessities—their hunger, their cold, and their nakedness! Your Committee are not endeavoring merely to make out a case, they speak of *facts*, the knowledge of which has made their own hearts sad. And, oh, they wonder not that our pious youth sicken at such ministerial prospects! Fathers and Brethren! we may regret the want of a nobler and more confiding faith in our younger brethren, but what must be the sin, almost unpardonable, of those members of Christ whose covetousness it is, that subjects the faith of these youthful aspirants to the service of the sanctuary to so severe a test; thereby, also, leaving the thousands of the Redeemer's flock as sheep having no shepherd.

Having thus shown the deep necessity that exists for some energetic measures being adopted, and that immediately, if we would not have our Diocese gradually become a moral wilderness, and behold *Ichabod*, "Forsaken of the Lord," written upon the Church therein; your Committee address themselves to the more direct consideration of the duty specially intrusted to them, namely, the suggestion of some means, in accordance with the principles of Holy Writ, whereby it may be expected that *an assured and respectable support will be obtained for the Clergy*. On this portion of their task, however, they enter with much diffidence, not because they doubt that an exact and ample provision for this, as well as every other matter connected with the Church's welfare, has been made by her Divine head; but, because Christians generally have departed so far from sacred principles herein, that your Committee fear to shock their prejudices in attempting to bring them back to that only method of supporting the duly commissioned Servants of His Sanctuary, which has ever received the full sanction of Infinite Wisdom and Authority; and which, therefore, they are deeply convinced, can alone be ever completely successful. Human schemes have been fully tried—land endowments, state support, simple voluntaryism, rented pews, &c., &c., but all, though valuable it may be, save, perhaps, the last, renting of pews, as adjuncts, have signally failed in supplying means for the proper support of an adequately numerous Clergy; for none of them were THE method which the Most High has instituted for that purpose. In all His plans, He has cared for the profit of the giver, at least as much as for that of the receiver: hence He has ever required His people—in order to the cultivation of an unworldly spirit in themselves—individually and with unceasing regularity, *to pay to him a certain fixed portion of their incomes*—a large portion of which He appropriated as the inheritance of His Ministers; leaving it to the love of His people to render to His service, in free will offerings, as occasion might require, *more* than the stipulated demands of His law. So is it now; God is the same, and His "chosen" are the same, only with vastly higher privileges than when these tests of obedient love were first instituted. It is in grace as in nature, the "seed" of the Church "is in herself;" she is "a tree of righteousness, the planting of the Lord," and He designs that she should be "a tree in which is the fruit of a tree-yielding seed." Thus, while the love of her children is continually manifested by these regular payments and offerings to God, their innate selfishness and natural covetousness are as continually kept in check.

This is a duty, therefore, concerning which, more especially considering our natural repugnance to its performance, it is imperatively necessary that the authoritative counsels of the Bishop and his Synod should be most distinctly heard. If, as your Committee firmly believe, a Divine law, enforcing, at least, the lowest scale of our payments to God, still exist, it is essential, on every account, that the sleepy consciences of His cold-hearted children be aroused until they realy feel its sacred obligation.

Your Committee, animated themselves by a deep sense of the important truths contained in the foregoing statements, beg leave most respectfully to suggest as follows:—

1st. That every means be adopted, by Sermons, Tracts, &c., to convince the members of the Church that God has a controversy with His people in this day, because of their withholding, from Him and His cause—especially in the case of His Priesthood—a due portion of those earthly goods which He is continually bestowing upon them. Yea, is it not owing to this very sin that such large portions of this fine Continent are so frequently subjected to a scourge, which threatens to "cut off the meat before our eyes, causing the "husbandman and the

vine-dresser to be ashamed, and howl for the wheat and for the barley, because the harvest of the field is perished ?"

2nd. That, under the most binding official sanctions, the duty be earnestly impressed upon them, of every Christian *setting apart a certain fixed portion of his or her income for the proper maintenance of God's Ministers and Church.* Accompanied with the solemn assurance that this obligation is quite as strongly enforced by the principles of the Gospel as it was by those of the Patriarchal or Mosaic Dispensations ; as is so plainly shown, to mention a single instance, in that striking command of St. Paul to the Corintheans, "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store *as*" (*in proportion as*) "God hath prospered him." Your committee recommend that it be further stated, that the least portion which the Lord ever deigned to accept at His people's hands, from the earliest patriarchal ages to the present time, has been ONE TENTH of their incomes. Let it also be noted, that, under the Jewish Dispensation, which is declared, by inspiration, to have been the "pattern" of the "Heavenly," or Christian, Church, this tenth was, as before stated, given to the priesthood, nor was even that the whole of the patrimony which Divine liberality had provided for them. The Mosaic Law further required about two other tenths to be paid, one for the Temple and its services, and the other for the poor. Thus, inclusive of free-will offerings, it would appear that Jehovah expected the faithful Israelites to devote more than ONE-THIRD of their entire incomes to works of religion and piety. And here your committee cannot but remark, that never were God's ancient people so personally wealthy, or so nationally prosperous, as during those periods of their history in which these large payments were most conscientiously and cheerfully made.

In offering these suggestions, your Committee have been encouraged by the consciousness that they were following the guidance of Infinite Wisdom; and they crave your patience, my Lord, Fathers, and Brethren, for the subject is one of vast importance, while, before proceeding further, they make a few observations upon the beautiful adaptation of this plan to accomplish the ends designed; as might indeed be expected when it is recollected that its author is Divine :

(1.) First, then, it is the poor to whom, especially, the Gospel is preached ; and by every one thus paying even a single tenth of their income to God, it will at least begin to be, as it is fitting it should, from the numerous offerings of the poor, large in their aggregate, that the Clergy will chiefly derive their support ; thus it will be no longer in the power of a few wealthy individuals to dictate a worldly policy as the governing principle of the Church; and, in the opinion of your Committee, this freedom from earthly trammels would itself be no small gain.

(2.) Again, the rich and the poor, by thus equally giving "as the Lord hath prospered them," will, if otherwise faithful, be alike "laying up treasure in heaven."

(3.) Such payments have the further great advantage of being voluntary as respects legal compulsion. Consequently, if paid because enjoined by Christ and His Church, they become the offerings of faithful obedience and love, and will on that account, also, be abundantly rewarded.

(4.) But the great result to which your Committee beg to direct your special attention at this time, as following from this Divine rule—of setting apart a fixed portion of our incomes for His service—were it generally adopted even by the faithful, is, that the maintenance of the Church and her ministers would be exempt from that meagre and fluctuating character which has been so long the bane of

their usefulness. Ceasing any longer to be a mere question of what we "can spare without feeling it," from our fleshly luxuries, these offerings would henceforth be regarded *as debts due to God*, and be deemed by the righteous man as amongst the most sacred of his obligations.

3rdly. In returning, however, to the immediate object of their Report, the suggestion of remedial measures in our present difficulties, your Committee beg to offer, as their third recommendation, that the Lord Bishop, aided by a Committee of eight persons—four clergymen and four laymen, to be chosen by Synod—be respectfully requested to form a scale of minimum Clerical Incomes, according to the position of the parish in City, Village, or Country, and such other circumstances as it may be deemed proper to take into consideration.

4thly. That his Lordship be further most respectfully requested to visit, accompanied by two Clerical assistants, also to be chosen by Synod, every Parish in the Diocese; and, after meeting its Vestry, to arrange, aided by the counsels of his Synodical assistants, the Incumbent, if any, and the Church-Wardens, whether such Parish shall be expected to pay the whole of its Incumbent's salary, or what portion thereof; requiring, also, that in every case a Parsonage shall be provided by the Parish. The balance of the Clergyman's salary, if any, to be paid out of a "Diocesan Parochial Fund;" the establishment of which it is hereinafter proposed to provide for. Such visitation, of non-self-supporting Parishes, to be repeated at stated intervals, for the purpose of re-adjusting, as circumstances may require, their financial relations.

It is further recommended that, when a Parish shall fail to provide a Parsonage, or to pay the Incumbent's salary, or such portion thereof as has been required at the said visitation, it shall be competent for the Lord Bishop to remove him, and to unite the Parish to the nearest Travelling Mission. Unless, from special circumstances, it be decided to make up the deficiency out of the "Diocesan Parochial Fund."

5thly. That semi-annual Collections be made in every Parochial Congregation at Morning and Evening Service, on Trinity and Advent Sunday's, in aid of a Diocesan Parochial Fund; from which fund such portions of the salaries of the Parochial Clergy as are not provided for by their Parishes shall be paid.

And that it be strongly impressed upon the consciences of all members of the Church to contribute with a holy liberality, out of that portion of their incomes which they have dedicated to God, on each of these semi-annual occasions; as, upon the success of this fund, the stability of the Church in this Diocese appears greatly to depend.

Let it be further understood to be the authoritative advice of the Lord Bishop and this Synod, that, as far as possible, every Clergyman shall, on one or other of the above days, preach on the positive duty of all Christians dedicating a certain portion of their incomes, "according as the Lord has prospered them," to His service, with the great profit, present and future, of adding thereto liberal free-will offerings.

6thly. Your Committee recommend, that it be further distinctly enjoined, with all the holy authority of this Synod, and under the immediate sanction of the Lord Bishop, that, according to Divine institution, a large portion of the amounts so set apart for God shall be paid by Churchmen towards the support of their respective Parochial Clergyman.

Your Committee would also respectfully suggest, that these payments be made, as far as is possible, without interfering too abruptly with present usages, *weekly*, through the regular Sunday Offertory. They venture to make this suggestion on the following grounds:—Because it is the method clearly indicated in Holy

Scripture; because it is the law of the Church; because it gives a continual check to our earthly-mindedness; because, if left to longer periods, the sums might become so large as to require a sacrifice too great for our covetousness to make, thus causing us to defraud God, and so endanger our own salvation; because, by thus dispensing with pew-rents, the Church becomes what her Divine Founder designed she should be—the Church of the Poor; and finally, because to your Committee it appears that no act of Public Worship can be fully acceptable to Almighty God, in which we wilfully present ourselves empty handed before Him.

7thly. They recommend that the "Clergy Commutation Fund," as it falls in, shall be placed to the credit of the "Diocesan Parochial Fund," in aid of the poorer duly organized Parishes.

Your Committee feel that, perhaps, some explanation is requisite as to the principle by which they have been guided in this recommendation; especially as they are aware that individuals have thought that that fund should be used for the more spiritually destitute portions of the Province. Your Committee think, however, that they can show that the appropriation they suggest is the most Scriptural and the one which ultimately will most effectually tend to the good of the whole Diocese. Their reasons are these;—

(1.) It is just; inasmuch as it was by the gifts of a settled, or Parochial Clergy, that the fund was formed.

(2.) Upon a careful consideration of Apostolic practice in such matters, they find that it was apparently the invariable rule of these inspired men to make the cities the centres of their operations, and the places of their principal residence. Insomuch was this the case, that the term *pagan*, literally a villager or countryman, became the common appellation of the heathen, as not sharing in that belief in Christianity which was common amongst the dwellers in cities. In thus acting, the Apostles, and their immediate successors, were doubtless influenced by the conviction that the surest and speediest mode of evangelizing even the rural districts themselves, would be the Christianizing of the cities to which countrymen were continually resorting; and upon whom, therefore, the example, as well as the prayers and constant efforts, of the believers there resident, could not be without great effect; then, too, the numbers and wealth of the numerous converts in cities would enable the Apostles, subsequently, to carry or send the Gospel into the surrounding country with far greater rapidity than would have been possible if dependent only on their own isolated labors.

This Apostolic example and inspired reasoning, are equally applicable to our position, and are surely, therefore, an ample justification for our adopting a similar line of procedure.

(3.) Your Committee, however, are further convinced that the establishing of a number of Parishes which shall offer an assured, though moderate, respectability of income, and to which the Clergy may look forward for promotion, will afford very efficient aid in renewing and increasing their ranks; by removing that not unreasonable fear, of absolute penury, especially as their families should increase, at present existing in the breasts of many, who would otherwise gladly seek the sacred office of the Christian Priesthood.

8thly. Considering that it has ever been counted the duty and privilege of God's people not to come up to His House and offer Him of that "which cost them nothing;" and that there is the warrant of Scriptural authority and early Christian practice for making offerings to God in the persons of His Ministers,

when the performance of their sacred functions has been specially required by individuals, and seeing, as an additional reason, that in these days the incomes of those who "minister in holy things" is lamentably deficient, your Committee, therefore, advise that it be strongly recommended by this Synod to all Church-people, excepting the poor, that they do hereafter pay the "accustomed dues" for Marriages, Registration of Baptisms, Churchings, &c., to the officiating Clergyman, with such liberality as they are able.

Finally, your committee beg to state that they have entered thus fully into details, in order that, if their Report be received and printed, this important subject may be placed before the whole Diocese in all its bearings.

And now, in drawing their somewhat arduous labors to a close, and for the great length of which they hope the vital interest of the question intrusted to them for solution will be deemed a sufficient apology; your Committee beg leave to trespass on your patience a very little longer, while they make a few additional remarks in yet further vindication of the course they have pursued. They felt, then, that it would be useless, nay, sinful, to trifle with a task so important as that entrusted to them. They believed that the dearest interests of men, the glory of the Church, and the honor of Christ, are trembling in the balance; for "how shall the people believe in Him of Whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach except they be sent?" and how can they be sent, if Churchmen continue in their present penurious courses? Your Committee further believed that Infinite Wisdom has not only indicated the right method of obtaining the means for the due support of his Church and Ministry, but made it the duty of Christians to adopt that method. They had, consequently, no choice, but to enforce its observance as the only sure remedy for our present distress, or certain ground of future prosperity. And all they now ask of those who may be disposed to reject their Report, if there be any such, is, that before doing so, they will diligently, yea, prayerfully, "search the Scriptures" of the Old Testament, to the principles of which the Blessed Jesus Himself directed us as a rule of life; that they will do so, guided by the light, and influenced by the love, of the New Testament; not refusing to be instructed, also, by the self-denying examples and godly counsels of those who lived and suffered in the purest ages of the Church. Yea, and your Committee are satisfied that, after doing so, few indeed are the sincere of heart who will not feel that, were there no law upon the subject, the love of Calvary does indeed deserve, at least, as large an amount of self-sacrifice and cheerful liberality as were demanded amidst the terrible glories of Mount Sinai!

It has been also the aim of your Committee to retain *intact* those Parochial relations between the pastor and his flock, the value of which can scarcely be over-rated; and yet without subjecting him to that dependance upon the favor of individuals, which is one of the great objections to the voluntary system, as now in operation amongst us, and is of necessity so perilous to the holy freedom and personal faithfulness of clerical ministrations.

It may occur to some persons that a scale of payments such as have been now advocated, might in some Parishes make the Incumbent too wealthy. This, however, would rarely be the case, if cures are made sufficiently small for him to have the proper oversight of all his flock. But, at all events, this danger may be easily avoided by fixing the *maximum* as well as the *minimum*, which any Incumbent may receive as his regular official salary; the surplus from such Parishes going to the "Diocesan Parochial Fund." Thus would the wealthier Parishes be not only self-supporting, but largely aid in assisting their poorer brethren;

according to the principle so clearly enjoined by St. Paul, "For I mean not," says he, "that other men be eased and ye burdened; but by an equality, that now at this time your abundance may be a supply for their want, that their abundance also may be a supply for your want; that there may be equality; as it is written, He that gathered much had nothing over; and he that had gathered little had no lack."

Your Committee do not suppose that the suggestions they have made will at once remove the evils under which our Diocese, in common with so many others, is suffering; but they repeat their conviction that "the seed of the Church is within herself." They have also special reason for believing that many persons who evade the conviction that it is their duty to render more largely, and in fixed proportions, of their incomes to the service of God, when only pressed upon them by individual Clergymen, would at once feel a vastly increased responsibility were the same duty urged under the holy authority and earnest sanction of the Bishop and his Synod. Yea, your Committee feel deeply and solemnly assured that, if only the Church, in her corporate capacity, will not fear to teach as her Lord directs, ("whether men will hear, or whether they will forbear,") then He will see that she suffers no lack.

It will be noted that your Committee have not interfered with the great question of our Home Missions, or the other important interests connected with our "Diocesan Church Society;" they did not consider them as coming properly within the sphere of the task specially intrusted to them. They would, however, observe that if the principle which they have been so earnestly advocating—of *setting apart* a certain portion of their incomes *for holy uses*—be once general amongst God's faithful people, not only will our Parochial Clergy be suitably maintained, and their numbers rapidly multiplied, but ere long, also, "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them, and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose."

All of which is respectfully submitted.

ADAM TOWNLEY, D. D.,
Chairman.

DIOCESE OF HURON, C. W.,
June 23, 1859.